

**Alagnak River**

**Alatna River**

**Andreafsky river**

**Aniakchak River**

**Beaver Creek**

**Birch Creek**

**Charley River**

**Chilikadrotna River**

**Delta River**

**Fortymile River**

**Gulkana River**

**Ivishak River**

**John River**

**Kobuk River**

**Koyukuk River, North Fork**

**Mulchatna River**

**Noatak River**

**Nowitna River**

**Salmon River**

**Selawik River**

**Sheenjek River**

**Tinayguk River**

**Tlikakila River**

**Unalakleet River**

**Wind River**

# OFFICIALLY DESIGNATED RIVERS OF THE NATIONAL WILD AND SCENIC RIVER SYSTEM IN ALASKA

## River Rating:

River difficulty ratings can change with water levels. High water has added hazards of floating logs, trees, and other debris. Always walk the river bank to preview any sections that could cause problems. Also, be cautious in how you interpret the International Whitewater Scale. Even within the lower 48, there are some regional differences; a river rated as WW3 on the East Coast might not be classified as WW3 in the Northwest. Remember that in the lower 48 you'd probably be able to walk out to the nearest highway if you lose your boat, but this is not the case in the remote wilderness areas of Alaska. River classifications should be upgraded due to difficulty of rescue.

## Water Classifications

### Flat Water:

FWA (Class A): Easy, lakes and standing water or very low streams. Little wind or wave activity expected. Sheltered and accessible location.

FWB (Class B): Moderate, Rivers and streams with currents that can be overcome by backpaddling. Moderate wind and wave action.

FWC (Class C): Difficult, River and stream currents faster than can be overcome easily by backpaddling. Skills necessary for sharp bends and back eddies in rivers. Landing and launching require skill and care. Storm winds and wave action possible. Extended duration of trip or remote wilderness locations.

### White Water:

WWI (Class I): Easy, moving water with small regular waves, riffles and sandbanks. Few or no obstructions.

WW2 (Class II): Medium, rapids with waves up to 3 ft and wide obvious, clear channels, some maneuvering required.

WW3 (Class III): Difficult, rapids with numerous high, irregular waves capable of swamping an open canoe. A splash cover is necessary. Narrow passages require complex maneuvering, scouting the route from shore is recommended.

WW4 (Class IV): Very Difficult, rapids with turbulent waters, rocks and dangerous eddies. Constricted passages require powerful precise maneuvering and inspection of the route mandatory. Normally too difficult for experts in open canoes. Boaters in covered canoes and kayaks should be able to eskimo roll. Crash helmets and positive flotation in the boats mandatory.

WW5 (Class V): Extremely difficult, long violent rapids with rocks, big ledges, very steep gradient and other serious obstacles in the route. Scouting the route from shore is required for safety. Rescue could be difficult, and significant hazard to life exists in the event of mishap. Eskimo roll under adverse conditions is essential. For teamed experts only.

WW6 (Class VI): Extraordinarily difficult, nearly impossible and very dangerous waters. For teams of experts with experienced rescue teams and equipment on the banks. Cannot be attempted without the risk of life.

## **River Information**

### **Alagnak National Wild River**

The Alagnak River flows from Kukaklek Lake in Katmai National Preserve and offers 69 miles of outstanding white-water floating. The river is also noted for abundant wildlife and sport fishing for five species of salmon. Portions of the main branch lie outside and westward of Katmai. Best in June through September. Average trip length is 60-70 miles.

River Rating: WW3- FWC

### **Alatna National Wild River**

The stream lies wholly within Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve, in the central Brooks Range. It drains south from the treeless Arctic Divide to the Koyukuk River lowlands, through rugged alpine mountains in its upper reaches, to the broad forested valley floor. Wildlife, scenery, and interesting geologic features abound in the river corridor. Best in July through September. Trip length is 83 miles.

River Rating: WW3- FWB

### **Aniakchak National Wild River**

The river lies within Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve. It flows out of Surprise Lake, inside the caldera, and plunges spectacularly through "The Gates", part of the caldera wall. Rafts and experienced rafters are recommended for

these turbulent waters. Best in June through September. Trip length is 63 miles.

River Rating: WW1-WW4

### **Andreafsky National Wild River**

The Andreafsky and its East fork flow through parallel valleys and are clear rivers that rise in tundra-covered uplands to meander through balsam poplar and white spruce forests. They are found inside the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. All but the lower 20-30 miles is designated Wild River. Best in late May through September and the average trip length is 100 miles.

River Rating: WW2-FWB

### **Beaver Creek National Wild River**

A clear, gentle wilderness stream that winds through rich boreal forests in rounded mountains of the White Mountains National Recreation Area. At "Big Bend", warm springs keep the river open all winter, providing good late-season grayling fishing. It does not have large rapids or serious obstacles, although the upper river flows over exposed bedrock. Best in May through September. Trip length is 130 miles long.

River Rating: WW1- FWB

### **Birch Creek National Wild River**

Located in the Steese National Conservation Area, Birch Creek's headwaters are near timberline in the rolling Yukon-Tanana uplands. The river winds through boreal forested valleys to emerge eventually in the wetlands of the Yukon River valley in the

Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge. During periods of low water, the upper 8 miles of the river may require lining and extensive dragging. Best in May through July. Average trip is 125 miles.

River Rating: WW1-WW3

### **Charley National Wild River**

Found within the Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve, this stream is known for its exceptional clarity. It has shallow, braided upper reaches and a middle section that skirts steep rock bluffs. The lower river meanders through muskeg and black spruce woods. Charley offers many miles of whitewater challenges. Best in June through August. Trip length is 203 miles long.

River Rating: WW1-WW4

### **Gulkana National Wild River**

Located north of Glennallen, and flowing southward through the forested foothills of the Alaska Range, the Gulkana is moderately difficult white water with three floatable branches; the main stem, Middle Fork and West Fork. The West Fork is a relaxing meandering stream, but watch for log jams. The main stem and the Middle Fork can be much harder. Best in August through September. Average trips range 35-119 miles.

River Rating: Main and Middle Fork WW4-FWA, West Fork WW2-FWA



### **Ivishak National Wild River**

Located in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the Ivishak is a highly braided, swift river on the treeless arctic tundra. The upper half of the Ivishak flows through tundra covered mountains with excellent hiking terrain. Overflow ice on the floodplain can remain much of the summer, scouting may be needed to make sure the river does not disappear under an ice shelf. Best in July. Average trips range 25-150 miles.

River Rating: WW1-FWC

### **John National Wild River**

The river flows south through the Anaktuvuk Pass of the Brooks Range, in the Gates of the Arctic National Park. A clearwater river that drops gently from its treeless alpine headwaters to richly forested lowlands. The Hunt Fork is the starting point as the waters above this fork are normally too low to float, although some have portaged and lined from Anaktuvuk Pass. Best in July through September. Average trip is 100 miles.

River Rating: Anaktuvuk Pass WW1-WW3, Hunt Fork WW1-WW2

### **Kobuk National Wild River**

The river is located in the Gates of the Arctic National Park. The Kobuk flows through two scenic canyons in the southern Brooks Range and meanders across a broad wetlands valley near Kobuk village. Downstream from Walker Lake is a WW3-4 area and in the Lower Kobuk Canyon, a

WW2-3 rapid section is present. Both should be lined or portaged. Best in July to September. Average trip length is 140 miles.

River Rating: WW1-FWB with portages

### **North Fork of the Koyukuk National Wild River**

Located in the Gates of the Arctic National Park, is a clearwater surrounded by rugged Endicott Mtns. and drains the south-facing slopes of the Brooks Range. Boaters can fly into "Summit Lake" at the headwaters of the N. Fork, but expect a difficult portage and considerable lining well past Doonerak Mtn. Best in July to September. Average trip length is 100 miles.

River Rating: WW1-2

### **Mulchatna National Wild River**

Located in Lake Clark National Park and Preserve, the Mulchatna flows through the rolling Bonanza Hills in a challenging, shallow, rocky channel, more suitable for rafts and kayaks than canoes. Best in June to September. Trips can be 100-230 miles long.

River Rating: WW3-FWC

### **Noatak National Wild River**

Located in the Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve and the Noatak National Preserve, the river flows through narrow canyons, beside steep walled peaks, across broad lake dotted basins and down two

valleys to open as a wide braided river on a forested floodplain. Below Noatak village, the river flows through the Igichuk Hills to spread in a wide wetland delta, and eventually out into the Chukchi Sea near Kotzebue. Best in mid June to August. Average trip length is 350 miles.

River Rating: WW1-2

### **Nowitna National Wild River**

Located in Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge, the river flows clear and deep from gently rolling forested uplands in the Kuskokwim Mtns., along small bluffs and ridges and finally through flats before its confluence with the Yukon River. In the spring, high water and ice dams can back up more than 100 miles. Best in June to September. Average trip is 310 miles.

River Rating: WW1-FWC

### **Salmon National Wild River**

Located in the Kobuk Valley National Park, the Salmon descends through a popular-spruce forest to meander into the Kobuk River. Below Anaktok and Sheep creeks, this small river alternates short shallow pools and riffles. Downriver, the pools lengthen and the river deepens. Noted for many beautiful rock outcroppings. Best in July to September. Trips can be 140 miles.

River Rating: WW1-FWA

### **Selawik National Wild River**

Located in the Selawik National Wildlife Refuge, is a long low-lying river and flows westward to empty into Selawik Lake. The upper third of the river has numerous boulders and sweepers. On the lower 25 miles, the current is slow but strong, west winds can create waves up to 3 ft high. Best in July through September. Average trip is 230 miles.

River Rating: WW1

### **Sheenjek National Wild River**

Located in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, this gentle clearwater river flows through a broad valley and drains on the south slopes of the Romanzof Mtns and skirts some of the highest peaks in the Brooks Range. The topography provides a long, relatively easy float that flows south from open tundra through subarctic boreal forests to the Yukon River Wetlands. Scouting is recommended because overflow ice can remain all summer. Best in July through mid- September. Average trip length is 230 miles.

River Rating: WW2-FWB

### **Tinayguk National Wild River**

The Tinayguk River is the largest tributary on the North Fork of the Koyukuk and lies within the Gates of the Arctic National Park. Tinayguk has extensive rocky rapids. Best in

July through September. Average trip length is 120 miles.

River Rating: WW2

### **Tlikakila National Wild River**

This river is found within the Lake Clark National Park. The small, fast, glacier fed river flows through a deep narrow valley formed by a fault and is surrounded by rugged snow capped peaks, waterfalls and sheer rock cliffs. Just below the confluence with the North Fork, a short section of WW3-4 rapids can be portaged on the left bank. When the water is high, other WW3-4 rapids appear in the next 3 miles after this confluence. Best in July to September. Average trip length is 70 miles.

River Rating: WW1-4

### **Unalakleet National Wild River**

Located east of the village of Unalakleet, this clearwater river begins in rough mountain country flowing through a broad valley in the Kaltag Mountains and flattens as it enters the Norton Sound. Best in June through September. The average trip is 70 miles.

River Rating: WW2-FWB

### **Wind National Wild River**

Located in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, flows south through an open tundra valley and into the forested floodplain of the

Chandalar River. Wind River offers an outstanding variety of white water opportunities. Best in July through mid-September and averages 180 miles long.

River Rating: WW1-3



# FOR INFORMATION:

# CONTACT THE FOLLOWING

<b>Alagnak River</b>	Katmai National Park & Preserve PO Box 7 King Salmon, AK 99613 (907) 246-3305	<b>Kobuk River</b>	Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve 201 First Ave Fairbanks, AK 99701 (907) 456-0281
<b>Alatna River</b>	Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve 201 First Ave Fairbanks, AK 99701 (907) 456-0281	<b>Koyukuk, Forth Fork</b>	Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve 201 First Ave Fairbanks, AK 99701 (907) 456-0281
<b>Andreafsky River</b>	Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge PO Box 346 Bethel, AK 99559 (907) 543-3151	<b>Mulchatna River</b>	Lake Clark National Park and Preserve/ APU 4230 University Dr. Grace Hall Suite 311 Anchorage, AK 99508 (907) 271-3751
<b>Aniakchak River</b>	Aniakchak National Monument and Preserve PO Box 7 King Salmon, AK 99613 (907) 246-3305	<b>Noatak River</b>	Noatak National Preserve PO Box 1029 Kotzebue, AK 99752 (907) 442-3890
<b>Beaver Creek</b>	BLM Fairbanks District Office 1150 University Ave. Fairbanks, AK 99709 (907) 474-2352	<b>Nowitna River</b>	Nowitna National Wildlife Refuge PO Box 287 Galena, AK 99741 (907) 656-1231
<b>Birch Creek</b>	BLM Fairbanks District Office 1150 University Ave. Fairbanks, AK 99709 (907) 474-2352	<b>Salmon River</b>	Kobuk Valley National Park PO Box 1029 Kotzebue, AK 99752 (907) 442-3890
<b>Charley River</b>	Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve PO Box 167 Eagle, AK 99738 (907) 547-2233	<b>Selawik River</b>	US Fish and Wildlife Services 1011 E Tudor Rd. Anchorage, AK 99503 (907) 267-1293
<b>Chilikadrotna River</b>	Lake Clark National Park and Preserve/ APU 4230 University Dr. Grace Hall Suite 311 Anchorage, AK 99508 (907) 271-3751	<b>Sheenjek River</b>	Arctic National Wildlife Refuge 101 12th Ave. Box 20 Fairbanks, AK (907) 456-0250
<b>Delta River</b>	BLM Glennallen District Office PO Box 147 Glennallen, AK 99588 (907) 822-3217	<b>Tinayguk River</b>	Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve 201 First Ave Fairbanks, AK 99701 (907) 456-0281
<b>Fortymile River</b>	BLM Fairbanks District Office 1150 University Ave. Fairbanks, AK 99709 (907) 474-2352	<b>Tlikakila River</b>	Lake Clark National Park and Preserve/ APU 4230 University Dr, Grace Hall Suite 311 Anchorage, AK 99508 (907) 271-3751
<b>Gulkana River</b>	BLM Glennallen District Office PO Box 147 Glennallen, AK 99588 (907) 822-3217	<b>Unalakleet River</b>	BLM Anchorage Field Office 4700 BLM Rd. Anchorage, AK 99513 (907) 267-1293
<b>Ivishak River</b>	Arctic National Wildlife Refuge 101 12th Ave. Box 20 Fairbanks, AK (907) 456-0250	<b>Wind River</b>	Arctic National Wildlife Refuge 101 12th Ave. Box 20 Fairbanks, AK (907) 456-0250
<b>John River</b>	Gates of the Arctic National Park & Preserve 201 First Ave Fairbanks, AK 99701 (907) 456-0281		



